

# INVENTING AN AMERICAN PUBLIC

Thomas Paine, the *Pennsylvania Magazine*,  
and American Revolutionary  
Political Discourse

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The July 1775 issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, edited by Thomas Paine, opens with an essay, "Observations on the Military Character of Ants," that purportedly investigates a new aspect of the nature of ants. The author, who writes under the pseudonym Curioso, observes that generally ants are cited only for their "industry and economy" but that "we have neglected to consider them as patriots jealous of their natural rights, and as champions in the defence of them" (295). He then relates his observations of the interactions between a colony of red ants and one of brown ants that inhabit his yard. The "reds" are portrayed as seeking to deprive the browns of their natural rights thereby forcing the browns to war, "A war which the browns were driven into by the overbearing insolence of the reds, and obliged to undertake for the protection of their settlement. Had they passively submitted, they might have again been treated in the same manner [deprived of their property], and have wearied out their lives in building cities for others to take from them" (299-300). The red ants are clearly identified with the British redcoats in this article, which uses the author's observations about ants as an occasion to justify the American colonies' right to raise an army to defend their property. Curioso ends his article by providing the moral to this story of the conflict between the two ant colonies: "A nation without defence is like a handsome woman without virtue, the easiness of the approach invites the ravager. And for the same reason that we ought not to tempt a thief by leaving our doors unlocked, we ought not to tempt an army of them by leaving a country or a coast unguarded" (300). Curioso thus suggests that the colonies should protect themselves from the British, characterized as thieves and invaders, if they wish to retain their freedom and property. An army here also becomes a masculine analogue to female chastity, serving as a means of protection

rather than aggression, and consequently the call for the colonies to raise an army is translated into an act of virtue, or, more precisely, into virtue itself.<sup>1</sup>

A few pages later, an article seemingly about matters of domestic comfort, "An Easy Method to Prevent the Increase of Bugs," continues the analogy of the British with bugs. In this brief item the writer suggests that his method of eradicating household bugs might also be used as a tactic to defeat General Gage's army: "if the communication could be cut off between the bed and the floor and wainscot, these gentry, like Gen. Gage's army, by being excluded from fresh provision, would be starved out" (305). By this time fighting had begun in Massachusetts and General Gage, commander of the British army in that colony, had attempted to quell the rebel outbreak.<sup>2</sup> While neither of the articles discussed above overtly states a political position, they clearly express anti-British sentiments. Under Paine's editorship the articles printed in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* rarely engage the political events and issues of the time directly; instead, the writers displace them onto other subjects, such as natural history, thus employing a strategy which enables them to address the significant ideological issues of the revolutionary period allegorically. Insofar as it naturalized politics, by making it part of the everyday, this strategy was designed to render politics more accessible to certain readers; however, it did not reach all readers, as is illustrated by one reader's response to "An Easy Method." Noting the difficulty of the method proposed in the article the anonymous letter writer suggests that his wife's method, namely cleanliness, would be a more effective solution to the problem. By focusing on the literal meaning of the article, the reader has entirely missed the significance of the reference to General Gage's army in the original piece.

Nevertheless, by contextualizing political discussion in such a way that it would not preclude the participation of any particular sector of the reading public, as editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* Paine attempted to make politics and political action available to a broader segment of the population than was previously thought desirable or imagined possible. For, as Kenneth Cmiel has suggested, in the eighteenth century access to the public sphere was largely restricted to the members of an elite class who were learned in the rhetorical forms appropriate for any discussion of civic affairs (31).<sup>3</sup> Prior to Paine colonial American writers, most notably John Adams and John Dickinson, had advocated the need for an informed citizenry, but in *Common Sense* Paine would be the first to write to and for the common people as participants in the political issues of the day.<sup>4</sup> As Paine's most recent biographer has noted, through his works Paine "invented a plain style crafted to capture the attention, and secure the trust, of audiences previously accustomed to being pushed about or ignored, not being written for, talked about, and taken seriously as active citizens" (Keane x). The key for Paine was to discover a way to mobilize these people.

In essence, then, Paine sought to expand the "public" included under the rubric of the "public sphere" to make it more representative of the general population, more democratic.

Paine, however, did not merely "secure the trust" of an already-existing audience, he invented a public which he could then claim to represent in his writings. In his critique of Jürgen Habermas's description of the public sphere, Keith Michael Baker contends that "'Public opinion' took form as a political or ideological construct, rather than as a discrete sociological referent" (172). Paine, it seems to me, bears out Baker's argument that the eighteenth-century version of public opinion, the tangible manifestation of the public sphere, should be understood as a political invention (Baker 168). This essay will argue that Thomas Paine was fundamentally involved in constructing a particular version of the public, which would then provide him with a legitimating constituency. The public whose opinion Paine wished to represent and enfranchise, however, was radically different from the public that was typically included in eighteenth-century political debates. As Richard Brown has recently shown, in the middle of the eighteenth century the lower ranks were still generally denied a public voice in the political debates of the age: "Common people should be sufficiently educated so as to value subordination and deference over the siren calls of demagogues, but they should not be so well informed that they would dare to judge public affairs on their own" (43-44). In order to expand the public sphere to make it more accessible to common people, then, Paine had to invent a language that would represent them as legitimate participants in the public sphere. Paine's acute understanding of the nature of the public sphere, as an invention, and his ability to manipulate public opinion was by no means accidental; on the contrary, it was intimately linked to his training as a magazine editor, his conception of writing, and his self-identification as a professional political writer.

Historians, biographers, and other scholars who have studied Paine have generally marveled at the fact that he wrote *Common Sense* only a year after leaving England for Philadelphia. So far nobody has been able to explain fully why Paine's revolutionary pamphlet was so extraordinarily successful. Most Paine scholarship has focused on his political philosophy and its implications for revolutionary America. Because of the massive popularity of his writings, scholars of the Revolution have generally felt compelled to deal with Paine, but more often than not he serves simply to confirm their broad intellectual, political, or social historical arguments about the true nature of the Revolution. Over the last quarter century, scholars of the republican paradigm have struggled to incorporate Paine into their interpretation of the Revolution, even though his oeuvre would seem to contradict the very ascendancy of republican ideology for which they are arguing.<sup>5</sup>

On the few occasions when historians, such as Eric Foner and Olivia Smith, have credited Paine for his stylistic and rhetorical innovations they have failed to inquire into the origins or logic of those innovations. In the "Introduction" to *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America*, for example, Foner argues that "What made Paine unique was that he forged a new political language" (xvi). Rather than describe that language, however, Foner proceeds to lay out the social and political context in which Paine wrote. Consequently, studies such as Foner's end up emphasizing Paine's contributions as a political thinker at the expense of considering him as a writer. If we are truly going to understand Paine and his contributions to the American Revolution, we must understand the literary as well as the political, philosophical, and social contexts of his writings. This failure to engage with Paine as a writer partly explains why scholars have essentially ignored his first year in America, during which time he edited the *Pennsylvania Magazine* and became deeply involved in colonial American politics.<sup>6</sup> The significance of Paine's brief stint as Aitken's editor is perhaps the most overlooked aspect of his emergence as a major figure in revolutionary American politics, precisely because it is difficult to imagine Paine writing *Common Sense* without the experience of editing the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, and without *Common Sense* Paine would not have gained the influence that he did.

#### THE RISE OF THE MAGAZINE

As editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* Paine not only contributed to the continuing development of the magazine in America, he also inherited a tradition, however short, of a particular kind of writing with a specific goal. The magazine emerged in the eighteenth century out of the same circumstances that resulted in the rise of the novel. In *Before Novels*, his study of the literary historical context that led to the emergence of the novel, J. Paul Hunter discusses various new types of publications that were produced by the ferment of eighteenth-century print culture. Hunter observes that in early eighteenth-century England, "New readers, new modes of literary production, changing tastes and a growing belief that traditional forms and conventions were too constrained and rigid to represent modern reality or to reach modern readers collaborated to mean—in the eyes of both proponents and critics—that much modern writing was taking radical new directions" (10). These radical alterations, Hunter notes, led to an explosion of new types of publications intended to take advantage of the potential new market of readers.

Strangely, Hunter does not include the magazine in his discussion of the novel publications of the era, though the magazine exemplified many of

the tendencies of the period that Hunter alludes to in his discussion of the changing world of print: "In the mixture of journalism and conversation, print record and loose talk, fiction and fact, informed opinion and baseless speculation, the oral and written cultures dramatically meet and interact in the coffeehouse milieu, reflecting changes in the larger world and demonstrating not only how quickly booksellers had learned to exploit the daily possibilities of print but also how 'talk' and the current opinion joined and enlarged the cycle of 'now' consciousness" (175). Hunter's description of the results of the convergence of oral and written cultures could also be used to describe the early magazine, which sought to combine essays on a wide spectrum of subjects with entertainment. If the coffeehouse's combination of a cacophony of voices and a multiplicity of topics served as the ideal model for innovative publishers in the eighteenth century, then the magazine, whose distinguishing characteristics were precisely the broad spectrum of topics addressed, its numerous contributors, and its accessibility to the general public, provided a natural print analogue to the discourse of the coffeehouse.<sup>7</sup>

The magazine was invented in 1731 by Edward Cave, a London printer and publisher who had worked for various newspapers prior to setting up for himself. Cave, sometime-printer, journalist, and postal clerk, purchased his own printing office in 1731, and shortly thereafter began publishing the *Gentleman's Magazine; or Trader's Monthly Intelligencer*. Cave's use of the word "magazine" to identify his publication was altogether new. Prior to 1731, the word "magazine," according to the OED, referred to "a place where goods are laid up; a storehouse or repository for goods or merchandise," whereas periodical publications were generally called journals or miscellanies. In the "Introduction" to the first issue of his magazine, Cave refers to his new application of the word: "This Consideration has induced several Gentlemen to promote a Monthly Collection, to treasure up, as in a Magazine, the most remarkable Pieces on the Subjects abovemention'd, or at least impartial Abridgments thereof, as a Method much better calculated to preserve those Things that are curious, than that of transcribing them" (January 1731, n.p.). Cave's magazine would thus share in the word's original meaning, but instead of containing goods or merchandise, his magazine would serve as a repository of a new kind of product, information, which, as Jürgen Habermas has suggested, had become an important commodity in eighteenth-century Europe: "For the traffic in news developed not only in connection with the needs of commerce; the news itself became a commodity" (21).

Cave's magazine took the form of a collection of information and entertainment ranging over a wide variety of topics and united under one cover. His motto for the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "E Pluribus Unum," captures this sense of his publication as a collection of diverse materials stored in one

place.<sup>8</sup> Cave envisioned his magazine as a remedy for the problems created by the proliferation of newspapers during the period:

Upon calculating the Number of News-Papers, 'tis found that (besides divers written Accounts) no less than 200 Half-sheets a month are thrown from the Press only in London, and about as many printed elsewhere in the Three Kingdoms; a considerable part of which constantly exhibit Essays on various Subjects for Entertainment; and all the rest occasionally oblige their Readers with matters of Public concern, communicated to the World by Persons of Capacity thro' their Means: so that they are become the chief Channels of Amusement and Intelligence. But then being only loose Papers, uncertainly scatter'd about, it often happens, that many things deserving Attention, contained in them, are only seen by Accident, and others not sufficiently publish'd or preserved for universal Benefit and Information. (January 1731, "Introduction," n.p.)

More significant than its centralizing mission, however, was the *Gentleman's Magazine's* inclusion of essays and news on a wide variety of subjects. The practice of anthologizing the best pieces from other publications was common by the first decade of the eighteenth century, but the literary miscellanies and historical journals that engaged in this practice only published essays that fell under the rubric of their respective areas of interest, be they politics, poetry, or historical essays. In other words, literary miscellanies did not print items from the news, or historical essays, and, likewise, historical journals did not print literary works; instead, each area of knowledge was treated separately in its own journals.

Cave, however, set out to produce a publication which would not be limited by subject or other forms of boundaries: his magazine would print interesting items on a broad range of subjects. The inclusiveness of Cave's publication is evidenced in his advertisement announcing the new *Gentleman's Magazine* where he lists the variety of subjects to be treated in it:

Public Affairs, Foreign and Domestick,  
Births, Marriages, and Deaths of Eminent Persons,  
Preferments, Ecclesiastical and Civil.  
Prices of Goods, Grains and Stocks.  
Bankrupts declar'd and Books Publish'd  
Pieces of Humor and Poetry  
Disputes in Politicks and Learning  
Remarkable Advertisements and Occurrences.  
Lists of the Civil and Military Establishment.  
And whatever is worth quoting from the  
Numerous Papers of News and Entertainment, British

and Foreign; or shall be Communicated  
proper for Publication.

With Instructions for Gardening, and the Fairs for February.  
(*Universal Spectator*, 30 January 1731)

Thus, the *Gentleman's Magazine* sought to become a compendium of the useful knowledge of the day. In this regard, it shared the same fundamental purpose as Diderot's *Encyclopédie*. The crucial difference, however, is that Cave's project was aimed at a general audience.

Just as his creative appropriation of the term magazine had helped Cave define his publication's mission, the first word in his publication's title, "gentleman," played an equally important role in his literary project. Through the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the term gentleman referred to a very specific and strictly defined segment of the population in Britain, which was described in 1626 by Sir Henry Spelman: "Gentleman is the lowest class of the lesser nobility in England. The appellation, however, is fitting even for the greatest; but it applies to the former generically as being the threshold of nobility, to the latter specifically as the highest degree of the name" (qtd. in Beckett 19). By the eighteenth century the term had evolved to the point that it no longer referred exclusively to the lesser nobility but was being used by wealthy individuals who did not possess a coat of arms. Nevertheless, in practice gentleman still referred to members of the aristocracy, only now wealthy individuals who were not members of the nobility were also commonly identified as gentlemen. If the group identified by the term "gentleman" now consisted of a larger segment of Britons in its expansion from the nobility to a landed and a monied aristocracy, an exclusive set of individuals still effectively controlled British politics. The aristocracy, Stephen Shapin has observed, "regarded themselves as the political nation, and, so far as having a voice in the sanctioned public forums was concerned, they *were* the political nation. It was their voices that were heard in national political deliberations; they effectively exercised their individual wills in economic, legal, and political deliberations; and they legally spoke for all the rest" (46).

While the aristocracy may have controlled British politics, their voices began to encounter increasing competition from the middle classes during the eighteenth century. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas contends that the proliferation of information via the newspapers and the emergence of coffeehouse culture in the early part of the eighteenth century gave rise to the "bourgeois public sphere" which in turn validated public opinion as a legitimate voice in national politics. The connection between literature and politics is crucial to the process that Habermas describes: "The public sphere in the political realm evolved from the public sphere in the world of letters; through the vehicle of public

opinion it put the state in touch with the needs of society" (30-31). Habermas argues that the introduction of "critical reasoning" into the daily press in the form of "periodicals containing not primarily information but pedagogical instructions and even criticism and reviews" represented the crucial step which allowed private people to "compel public authority to legitimate itself before public opinion" (24-25). As public opinion became increasingly important in national politics, so the aristocracy's uncontested status as *the* political nation was diminished. And, although they managed to retain political control in England into the twentieth century, now they had to contend with the will of "the people."

At the same time that public opinion was emerging as a legitimate voice in national politics, the category of gentleman, with its traditional interrelationship with honor, was increasingly under question.<sup>9</sup> Cave's use of the term "gentleman" in the title to his magazine reflects the changing notions about the definition of who qualified for membership in the group of people who could legitimately identify themselves as gentlemen. The interchangeability of gentleman and merchant suggested by the full title of Cave's magazine, *The Gentleman's Magazine; or Trader's Monthly Intelligencer*, reflects a new social ideology that does not see honor, which was understood to be the basis of gentility in the seventeenth century, as an inherited characteristic, and, moreover, that does not equate gentlemen with membership in the nobility or landed gentry. Implicit in Cave's title, then, is the notion that the status of a gentleman could be acquired, not just inherited. To this end, Cave reprinted various pieces from the London papers that dealt specifically with the qualities that one must obtain to become a gentleman. Not surprisingly, in one of the earliest issues, May 1731, Cave reprints an item from the *Weekly Register* describing the kinds of knowledge that a gentleman ought to possess:

To make a perfectly good Companion, a Man should have so much Learning as to enable him to taste the Greek and Latin Authors; an Extensive and general Knowledge of Men and Things; Judgment, Wit, vivacity, Humour, good Nature, or a strong desire to please. But as all of these are not to be expected in one Man, 'tis however necessary he should have two of them, *viz.* Knowledge and good Nature. The more general our Knowledge is, the better. For he who is master of but one or two things is usually a pedant; wise in one thing, and a blockhead in everything else. Our Knowledge should be in the first place, that which is most useful, then that which is most fashionable and becoming a Gentleman, Moral Knowledge, or the Science of Life, is absolutely necessary for our own happy Conduct. Natural Philosophy entertains and fills the Mind with great and sublime Ideas of the first Cause. The History of Men in all Ages and Countries, their Manners,



Customs and Laws; which to read with Advantage, 'tis necessary to understand Geography and Chronology. Bids us study the History of our own Country, and read Poetry to improve our Imagination and Language. (198)

It is, of course, no accident that most of the topics identified as indispensable knowledge for a gentleman in this piece correspond to those Cave had enumerated in the advertisement for his magazine five months earlier. The *Gentleman's Magazine*, therefore, served as an instrument in the identification and education of a new class of gentlemen in Britain. As aristocratic ideology lost much of its authority to define, and therefore to limit, the categories of gentry and gentility, and worth began to supersede birth as the primary qualification for inclusion among the genteel, publications such as Cave's became crucial in the definition of the nature and dissemination of the means of such worth.<sup>10</sup> By making a certain kind of compendious knowledge one of the basic requirements of a gentleman's character, Cave naturally promoted his own interests, for his magazine enabled readers to acquire precisely the kind of knowledge required by a gentleman.

If Cave's *Gentlemen's Magazine* provided a model of success, it also showed that in order to succeed the magazine had simultaneously to represent its audience and recreate it. Cave did not create the new category of gentlemen that emerged in the early part of the eighteenth century, but he certainly had a hand in reshaping the category as it continued to evolve over the course of the century. Paine, likewise, did not single-handedly create the *Pennsylvania Magazine* or its audience, but in order for it to be successful he would have to first identify his audience and then attempt to reinvent it. The audience that the *Pennsylvania Magazine* aimed to attract was somewhat different from Cave's. In the absence of a proliferation of journals and other forms of serial publications that Cave's magazine had had to compete with in London, the form of publication most akin to the magazine in Philadelphia at the time was the almanac. A typical almanac primarily focused on pseudoscientific information (primarily dedicated to a daily calendar predicting the weather for the year, but also including sections on various other natural phenomena such as eclipses, the location of the planets, the tides, and the rising and setting of the sun). Most almanacs, though, would also include various short essays on a wide range of subjects. In 1775 John Carter's *The New England Almanac, or Lady's and Gentlemen's Diary*, for example, prefaced each month's calendar with a brief essay, usually no longer than six lines. In addition it included a three page essay, "A Brief View of the Present Controversy between Great-Britain and America, with some Observations thereon." In 1776 *Poor Will's Almanac* called attention to its essay content on its title page by setting it off from the generic fare with a largely printed ALSO, under which appeared the following descrip-

tion: "Monthly Observations on Gardening, a Collection of Useful Receipts, and a Variety of Essays in Prose and Verse." By including a "Meteorological Diary" section in each issue the *Pennsylvania Magazine* plays upon its resemblance to an almanac, simply shifting the emphasis from one section of the Almanac to another. The almanac's typical lower and middling sort readership was precisely the audience Paine, the son of an artisan, would repeatedly attempt to politicize over the course of his writing career.

In the end, his job as editor of a magazine proved invaluable to Paine's formation as a writer because he soon discovered that the particular nature of the magazine made it especially well suited to promoting his political goals. It did not hurt, moreover, that the magazine he would edit was based in Philadelphia, which had become the political and mercantile center of the British colonies in America. As the busiest port in the colonies, Philadelphia had the largest population of artisans and craftsmen in the colonies, most of whom supported the nonimportation agreements which went into effect on 1 December 1774 because they perceived the importation of British manufactures as an economic threat. In *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America* Eric Foner suggests that "The politicization of the mass of Philadelphians—from the master craftsmen to a significant segment of the laborers and poor—was the most important development in Philadelphia's political life in the decade before independence" (56). As editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, Paine became an active participant in the process of that politicization by publishing essays intended to foment popular political action.<sup>11</sup> If, as one of his biographers has stated, "1775 was not the happiest year to begin a literary journal," the volatile political atmosphere in Philadelphia provided an ideal environment for Paine to develop his skills (Hawke 27).

#### THE PENNSYLVANIA MAGAZINE

A couple of weeks before Paine arrived in Philadelphia, Robert Aitken had made public his proposal to publish a monthly magazine. By this time, sixteen different magazines had appeared and disappeared in the colonies. The last magazine published in Philadelphia, the *American Magazine and Monthly Chronicle*, edited by William Smith, had expired in October 1758 after a thirteen-month run. These early magazines had been American only by virtue of the fact that they were published in the colonies. According to Frank Luther Mott, "Probably at least three-fourths of the total contents of [the magazines published in the colonies between 1741 and 1794] were extracted from books, pamphlets, newspapers, and other magazines, both English and American. . . . Much of the larger part of the selections was, of course, English" (39). In the 21 November 1774 issue of the *Pennsylvania Packet*, a Philadelphia weekly newspaper, Aitken presented his plan for

the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, which was to be an "American Magazine" that would print original American essays and poetry, and not just reprint material from British publications.<sup>12</sup> In an advertisement accompanying the proposal for the magazine in the *Packet* Aitken further defined the role of his publication in broad moral terms: "being unalterably determined to conduct this Magazine upon a plan of the most extensive usefulness, and to admit nothing but what relates to the grand interests of *Learning, Virtue*, and our common *Christianity*." However, Aitken insisted that the magazine would remain strictly impartial in matters of politics and religion, an impartiality that the allegorical mode of the insect pieces both sustains and undermines.

As Stephen Botein has noted, printers were forced, by market conditions, to attempt to "please all customers at all times": "Usually unable to rely for a living on the favor of any one group among his neighbors, including those who wielded political power, a colonial printer by custom labored to serve diverse interests in the community. Unlike London, where large profits were sometimes to be had by making partisan commitments to one well-financed faction or another, colonial America was a place for printers to be studiously impartial" (19). So, while the *Pennsylvania Magazine* was pro-American, its challenge was to avoid the appearance of being a partisan publication. The combination of a volatile political atmosphere and the economic difficulties faced by a monthly journal's printer thus created the conditions that led to the choice of fables of one sort or another as the political writers' primary tool. But political subjects would not be completely ignored by Aitken's magazine: "As to the subjects of these dissertations, they may extend to the whole circle of science, including politics and religion as objects of philosophical disquisition, but excluding controversy in both. Lest this should offend any, all the political controversy proper for this periodical publication, will fall under the article of news" (n.p.). The *Pennsylvania Magazine* was to be divided into six separate sections with a definite emphasis placed on issues of particular interest to the American colonies—American essays, selected essays from British magazines, a list of new books with "remarks and extracts," a poetry section, news or "Monthly Intelligence," and a meteorological diary.

Aitken, who among other things had previously printed some of Benjamin Franklin's work,<sup>13</sup> published the first issue of his *Pennsylvania Magazine; or, American Monthly Museum* in February of 1775, and hired Paine, who arrived in Philadelphia with a letter of introduction from Franklin, as his editor for the following month. Paine's participation in the magazine, however, could more accurately be described as a contributing editorship since he also wrote a great deal of the material that was printed in the various issues he edited between February and August of 1775. Although Paine had never published anything substantial in England or edited any form of

publication in his life, his impact on the sales of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* was dramatic and immediate. Just a month after accepting Aitken's offer to edit the magazine, Paine wrote to Franklin about his new venture: "a printer and bookseller here, a man of reputation and property, Robert Aitken, has lately attempted a magazine, but having little or no turn that way himself, he has applied to me for assistance. He had not above six hundred subscribers when I first assisted him. We now have upwards of fifteen hundred, and daily increasing."<sup>14</sup> Paine had found both his audience and his voice. Under Paine's guidance the *Pennsylvania Magazine* would attain the greatest circulation of any American magazine up to that time (Mott 87).

Although he did not edit the debut issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, Paine made two significant contributions to it, the "Publishers Preface" and an essay entitled "The Utility of this Work Evinc'd," in which he presents his vision of the role of the magazine.<sup>15</sup> The "Preface" begins with an apology for the deficiencies of the publication, which Paine attributes first to its "infant state," and then perhaps more significantly, to the "present unfortunate, situation of public affairs" that has gained the attention of "those whose leisure and abilities, might lead them to a successful application to the Muses." Even as he states that "every heart and hand seem to be engaged in the interesting struggle for *American Liberty*," Paine reiterates Aitken's promise, from his proposal in the *Packet*, that the magazine shall remain impartial in order to "avoid giving offence to any by our publication." Nevertheless, Paine's involvement compromised Aitken's intentions from the outset because Paine brought what proved to be a decidedly political voice to the magazine.

In "The Utility of this Work Evinc'd," the lead article immediately following the "Publisher's Preface," Paine argues that magazines are useful because they provide the population with "the opportunities of acquiring and communicating knowledge" (9). He likens a "properly conducted" magazine to a "nursery of genius" which provides "exercise" for the mind so that it does not "fall into decay" (10). As a "nursery of genius" and a "market of wit," the magazine generically becomes an educational instrument which may be used to assist America as it "outgrow[s] the state of infancy." Thus, the *Pennsylvania Magazine* becomes a parental mentor in the process of educating the people of the colonies, a process that, within the context of the post-Lockean developmental models of the period, inevitably leads to independence.<sup>16</sup> By the second half of the eighteenth century, "letters," Michael Warner argues, "have become a technology of publicity whose meaning in the last analysis is civic and emancipatory" (3). The mission of the magazine to educate its readership thus implicitly involves it in the revolutionary process.<sup>17</sup>

To Paine the utility of the magazine stems precisely from its capacity to mold a people: "there is nothing which obtains so general an influence over

the manners and morals of a people as the press; from that, as from a fountain, the streams of vice or virtue are poured forth over a country: And of all publications none are more calculated to improve or infect than a periodical one" (10).<sup>18</sup> Once he has pointed out the power of the press to shape moral character, Paine indicts British magazines, those "retailers of tale and nonsense," for corrupting British readers. In America, by contrast, magazines hasten a process of purging Old World corruption: "The cottages as it were of yesterday have grown to villages, and the villages to cities, and while proud antiquity, like a skeleton in rags, parades the streets of other nations, their genius, as it sickened and disgusted with the phantom, comes hither for recovery" (9). Paine casts America as a haven from the corrupting influence of British magazines and thought, for he suggests that "There is a happy something in the climate of America, which disarms [foreign vices] of all their power both of infection and attraction" (10). Paine thus invokes the by-then commonplace theory, derived from Montesquieu, that physical environment plays a crucial role in the character of an area's inhabitants. This notion led Montesquieu to propose that "If it is true that the character of the spirit and the passions of the heart are extremely different in the various climates, *laus* should be relative to the differences in the passions and to the differences in these characters" (*Spirit* 231). At this point in his career Paine was not prepared to draw this conclusion regarding the fundamental relationship between the colonies and Great Britain. Nevertheless, he employs the environmental argument to suggest that the *Pennsylvania Magazine* will help to keep out foreign vices by printing mostly original essays written by Americans and minimizing the amount of British material. Paine thus extends the strategy of the nonimportation of British "articles" that was in effect in the commercial sector into the intellectual sphere.

Paine returns to the problem of the corrupting effect of British habits and customs that comes with the importation of British goods in an article in the next issue (February 1775) of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*. Whereas Paine was concerned with the influence of British wit on the American mind, the author of "Substitutes for Tea," who writes under the pseudonym "A Philanthropist," at first seems merely to suggest that tea generally has a detrimental effect on people's physical and mental health. He cites various doctors who have claimed that tea "has much increased the diseases of a nervous and languid nature," and includes his own observation, "I never saw a man or woman, who, from their youth was fond of, and practised drinking it freely, who was not rendered a weak, effeminate and creeping valetudinarian for life" (74). We soon discover, however, that his quarrel is not with all teas, but rather solely with "India Teas," that is, those imported from India via Britain. He advises a substitution of those teas with teas produced from American plants: "But if we must, through custom, have some warm tea, once or twice a day, why may we not ex-

change this slow poison, which besides its other evils destroys our constitution, and drains our country of many thousand pounds a year, for teas of our own American medicinal plants: many of which may be found, pleasant to the taste and very salutary, according to our various constitutions" (75). The real argument of this essay, then, proves not to be with tea itself, but with the practice of importing tea from Britain, for the idea is not to substitute tea with another kind of beverage, but rather to substitute one kind of tea for another. Whereas in his essay on the utility of magazines Paine warns about the danger of "infection" from British wit, this writer exposes the danger resulting from British teas, as both become symbolic forms of poison to Americans. The issue is not health so much as financial and commercial independence that in the context of the nonimportation agreements of recent months had become a deeply political matter.<sup>19</sup> It is not the weakening of the body, but the debilitating effect the importation of tea from Britain has on the body politic, reinforced by his repeated use of the word "constitution," that truly concerns "A Philanthropist."<sup>20</sup> Small wonder that after pointing out the medicinal virtues of various sources of tea native to the colonies, "A Philanthropist" ends his essay by appealing to the American aristocracy, "the gentleman and ladies of the first rank," to "use their influence and example, to abolish this pernicious custom of drinking the Asiatic teas, and introduce and persevere in using their own; they will have the self-pleasing satisfaction of having emancipated their country from the slavery and tyranny of an evil custom" (76).

Through articles such as this one the magazine fulfills its self-appointed mission of educating the American people in the path of independence ostensibly without making politics its primary subject. In particular, as Jay Fliegelman has observed, "Paine favored articles about marriage not only in justification of his own [marital] separation, but because domestic politics addressed the same ideological issues as international politics" (124). While the nature of the marriage bond was a subject of great interest during this era, it also served, like natural history in the insect articles, as an analogical context within which such broad ideological problems as consent and interdependence could be addressed without direct reference to the political relations between the colonies and Britain. To Paine, as the essay on the consumption of tea suggests, consent and interdependence were not only political issues, they were also essentially economic issues. One of the facets of marriage, therefore, that concerned Paine the most was precisely its economic dimension.

Two columns, "The Old Bachelor" and "Reflections on Marriage," the former sometimes written by Paine and in other instances by Francis Hopkinson or one of the various regular contributors to the magazine and the latter by John Witherspoon under the pseudonym Epaminondas, treated the subject of marriage on a regular basis. In addition to his con-

tributions to the "Old Bachelor" series, Paine, who left England after his separation from his wife, also contributed various articles and poems on the subject. Both the Old Bachelor and Epaminondas celebrate the virtues of marriage, but simultaneously emphasize that only a happy marriage is worth preserving. In his first three numbers, appearing in the March, April, and May 1775 issues of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, the Old Bachelor attributes his unhappiness and loneliness to his failure to marry. In a pseudonymous reply to the Old Bachelor, Paine sets out to demonstrate that the Old Bachelor "might have been as unhappy even in the desirable [sic] matrimonial state" (June 1775, 254). Paine writes the essay, "Consolation for the Old Bachelor," from the perspective of a local merchant whose wife insists that he take her and their six-year-old daughter to visit a "wealthy taylor" in New York. The ensuing tale recounts the trip which becomes a catalogue of distress and misery as the wife complains endlessly and blames the merchant for everything that goes wrong while carelessly spending his hard earned money.<sup>21</sup> The merchant, tyrannized over by his wife, emphasizes that his only recourse throughout is "silent patience" because his wife would not listen to him (257). Unlike Paine's merchant the American colonists were no longer willing to wait silently while their pleas for representation were being ignored by the British crown.

In his column from this very same issue of the magazine, the Old Bachelor agrees with Paine when he asserts that "No wife is better than a bad one and the same of a husband" (263). The Old Bachelor then sets up another critique of marriage, "Reflections on Unhappy Marriages," that he claims to have found by accident, but which was almost certainly written by Paine. In "Reflections on Unhappy Marriages" Paine identifies marriage as the most important determinant of "the weal or woe of life" and warns his readers about the dangers of rashly entering into so critical a relation as marriage for the wrong reasons, those being primarily passion or money. Paine dedicates most of the essay to condemning marriages of economic convenience: "Matches of this kind are downright prostitution, however softened by the letter of the law; and he or she who receives the golden equivalent of youth and beauty, so wretchedly bestowed, can never enjoy what they so dearly purchased" (264). Paine concludes his argument with the words of an "American savage" who rejects a Christian marriage because "not one in a hundred of them had anything to do with happiness or common sense." The savage elaborates on this theme: "But if any should be found so wretched among us, as to hate where the only commerce ought to be love, we instantly dissolve the band: God made us all in pairs; each has his mate somewhere or other; and 'tis our duty to find each other out, since no creature was ever intended to be miserable" (265). In his innocence the savage becomes a source of common sense and, by implication, suggests that excessive cultivation leads to moral decay.<sup>22</sup> The savage's use

of the term "commerce" to describe the marriage union only emphasizes the point that "mutual affection," and not economic gain, is the proper basis for this kind of relationship.

Paine thus uses the American savage as an advocate for divorce, arguing that no law should keep two people together who will only "double each other's misery." The savage prefers his customs to the Christian God's because in his people's customs marriages "last no longer than they bestow mutual pleasures" for they "oblige the heart" (265). Invoking a line of reasoning that Montesquieu had advocated fifty years earlier in his *Persian Letters*, Paine suggests that the true reason for marrying is not financial well-being or passion, but love, and if and when mutual affection subsides, as in the case of his relationship with his own wife, then the marriage should be terminated.<sup>23</sup> In a single issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* Paine uses "Consolation for the Old Bachelor" to depict the woes of an unhappy marriage, and "Reflections of Unhappy Marriages" to argue for the value of divorce as a means of ending marriages that are only making people miserable. In both cases, the relationship has deteriorated because it has been reduced from an emotional or affectionate tie to a commercial or economic one. Shifting the analogy from marital to parental, specifically maternal, relations, Paine would once again draw on this line of argument in *Common Sense* by repeatedly suggesting that Britain's interest in the colonies had sprung from economic motives rather than the affectionate concern of a parent. Paine even proposes that the analogy has been invoked for political ends: "the phrase *parent or mother country* hath been jesuitically adopted by the king and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds" (CW 1: 19). Ultimately, Paine suggests that the relationship between the colonies and Great Britain has not devolved from an affectionate union into an economic one; instead, it has always been a purely economic union.<sup>24</sup>

Many of the political ramifications implicit in the marriage articles come to the surface in a fable written by Paine for the April 1775 issue of the magazine. The fable would become one of Paine's favorite genres not only because it was already the most popular literary vehicle of religious instruction and political polemic during the first three-quarters of the eighteenth century, but because Paine also recognized that it was well suited to the needs of a magazine. As one critic has noted, "Simplicity and brevity are paramount virtues in the fable, qualities which also permit the literary dilettante to dash off a specimen without being wearied by prolonged creative thought" (Noel 13). The fable's wide appeal made it an ideal vehicle for Paine's political goals: "Despite the emphasis both Locke and Fénelon place on the use of fables in elementary education, the eighteenth century did not limit the genre to young minds. Its very acceptance as a literary genre stemmed from the conviction that everyone could read fables



for edification and enjoyment" (Noel 10). Thus, the fable's combination of brevity, didacticism, and accessibility (both to readers and potential contributors) corresponded perfectly with the material and political needs of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* under Paine's editorship.

Writing as "Esop," Paine invents an "original" fable, "Cupid and Hymen," in which Hymen, the god of marriage, attempts to wed Ruralinda, a poor villager who is in love with another man, to a rich lord who has paid her mother in exchange for Ruralinda's hand. Cupid, the god of love, intervenes and asserts his authority over Hymen who, he claims, has no authority to conduct a marriage without his approval:

Know Hymen, said he, that I am your master. Indulgent Jove gave you to me as a clerk, not as a rival, much less a superior. 'Tis my province to form the union and yours to witness it. But of late you have treacherously assumed to set up for yourself. 'Tis true you may chain couples together like criminals, but you cannot yoke them like lovers. . . . At best you are but a temporal and temporary god, whom Jove has appointed not to bestow, but to secure happiness, and restrain the infidelity of mankind. (159-60)

Significantly, Hymen has allied himself with Plutus, the god of riches, in an attempt to overmatch Cupid. The battle, then, is between love and money as the proper basis for the marital union. While at first it may seem that the crucial drama of the fable revolves around Hymen's "pretensions to independence," which are foiled by Cupid, the most important implication of Paine's fable for the political situation of the colonies involves the nature of marriage itself and the subordination of commercial to sentimental or emotional considerations. The central point of the fable derives precisely from Cupid's assertion of his authority over Hymen, for through Cupid Paine asserts the primacy of love in the union of marriage. Without Cupid's approval, the union can only be temporary, because Hymen alone cannot create a permanent bond, especially when Ruralinda will not voluntarily consent to the union.

Paine's decision to invoke Aesop and represent his own political allegory of "Cupid and Hymen" must have seemed only natural, given their broad popularity and cultural resonance in the eighteenth century. "Few books sold more steadily in eighteenth-century America than Aesop in the imported English editions of Croxall and Draper" (Wolf 46). In addition to its numerous British editions, Samuel Croxall's *Fables of Aesop and Others* (1722) went through four American editions between 1777 and 1800.<sup>25</sup> In fact, Aesop's fables were commonly used in schoolbooks both in England and throughout the colonies for they had the "additional advantage of providing morals" (Wolf 46). Samuel Croxall spells out the educational value of his version of Aesop in his dedication to the young George Lord

Viscount Sunbury, Baron Halifax: "These Fables, My Lord, abound in Variety of Instruction, Moral and Political; They furnish us with Rules for every Station of Life; They mark out a proper Behaviour for us, both in respect to ourselves and others; and demonstrate to us, by a kind of Example, every Virtue which claims our best Regards, and every Vice which we are most concerned to avoid" (London, A3 verso). In his applications Croxall explains the virtue to be emulated or vice to avoid that each fable addresses. While most of the fables deal with individual behavior, Croxall, as his dedication indicates, was well aware of the fact that more than a few political lessons are provided in them.

Croxall's version of Aesop, Annabel Patterson has shown, "was designed . . . to discredit [Roger L'Estrange] as one who had distorted his classical origins, and imposed upon them a political interpretation that was not only offensive to Whigs and libertarians, but incompatible with the fable's origins" (143). Leaving nothing to chance, Croxall ends his "Preface" to the *Fables* with an overt statement of his political beliefs and by extension, therefore, of the politics of his text: "Professing (according to the Principle on which the following Applications are built) that I am a Lover of Liberty and Truth; an Enemy to Tyranny, either in the Church or State, and one who detests Party Animosities and factious Divisions, as much as I wish the [Peace] and Prosperity of my County" (n.p.). While he could never have foreseen it, several decades later Croxall's statement as well as his "Applications," in which he defended individual rights and freedom whenever possible, would have appealed greatly to American revolutionary readers. In 1777 none other than Paine's former employer and publisher Robert Aitken printed the first American edition of Croxall's *Fables of Aesop and Others*. Thus, with "Cupid and Hymen" and the other fables he published in the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, Paine simply continues a tradition of employing the fable as a genre ideally suited to oppositional political writing. In this respect, despite their political differences, Paine follows in the tradition of L'Estrange, for whom in the late seventeenth century the fable "was necessary as a vehicle of otherwise prohibited criticism" (Patterson 140).

#### CONCLUSION

Thus, in articles on natural historical and domestic topics, essays on marriage, and fables, Paine repeatedly breaks down the division between the political and the nonpolitical realm even though the structure of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* marks that difference by its overinsistent division between the documentary "Monthly Intelligence" section and the nonpolitical essays in the main body. Paine understood that these separate spheres, marked by separate sections in the publication, often overlapped; and he exploited that tenuous boundary in ways few had before. On occasion,

however, he would print an explicitly political essay. In the July 1775 issue Paine complemented the "Monthly Intelligence" item "A Declaration by the Representatives of the United Colonies of North America, now met in General Congress at Philadelphia, setting forth the necessity of their taking up Arms," with essays such as "On the Military Character of Ants" and "Thoughts on Defensive War." As we have seen, Curioso's "On the Military Character of Ants" concludes by asserting the importance of national defense by casting the colonies in the role of a woman seeking to protect her virtue. In "Thoughts on Defensive War" Paine, writing under the pseudonym "A Lover of Peace," urges the Quakers to support the American colonies' cause and take up arms against the British stating that "America must suffer because *she* has something to lose. Her crime is property" (313, italics mine). Both pieces figure America as female and make chastity stand for all property which must be protected, thus shifting the emphasis of war from a question of aggression to one of the maintenance of virtue. In order to persuade the Quakers, Paine also analogizes spiritual freedom and political liberty, thus appealing to the same concepts of liberty and property that Curioso makes central to his argument in his essay on ants.

The principal arguments of these two essays are also employed in the Continental Congress's "Declaration . . . Setting Forth the Causes and Necessity of Their Taking Up Arms" where once again consent and property become the major issues at stake for the colonies. After providing a brief history of the relations between the colonies and Britain, the document states: "We are reduced to the alternative of chosing an unconditional submission to the tyranny of irritated ministers or resistance by force. . . . The latter is our choice. — We have counted the cost of this contest, and find nothing so dreadful as voluntary slavery" (qtd. in *Pennsylvania Magazine* 236). Like the brown ants in Curioso's article, the colonies present themselves as victims forced to defend themselves from enslavement. The document emphasizes that the sole reason for taking up arms is to defend their property rights and freedom and not to sever the union with Britain:

In our native land, in defence of the freedom that is our birthright, and which we ever enjoyed till the late violation of it—for the protection of our property, acquired solely by the honest industry of our fore-fathers and ourselves, against violence actually offered we have taken up arms. We shall lay them down when hostilities shall cease on the part of the aggressors, and all danger of their being renewed shall be removed, and not before. (237)

In this passage the Continental Congress's statement not only echoes the rhetoric used by "Curioso" and "A Lover of Peace" to justify the use of military force to defend one's property, but it also recalls much of the rhetoric of the articles on marriage in its assertion that the Parliament has

become tyrannical in its determination to establish specific measures without the consent of the colonies.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, just as he approves of divorce to remedy an unhappy marital relationship, Paine advocates revolution as a solution to the intolerable relationship between the colonies and Great Britain. What was implicitly political allegory in the articles on marriage, here becomes the explicit political agenda. The first two articles thus serve to prepare the audience for the last, and in so doing attempt to direct the reader's interpretation and reaction to it. Thus, in order to participate as a voice in the revolutionary process, the *Pennsylvania Magazine* blurred the distinction between political and nonpolitical material. The difference between the articles in the main section of the magazine and the material in the Monthly Intelligence section is largely the difference between the overtly political and the covertly political.

Moreover, through allegory—either used directly in articles like “Observations on the Military Character of Ants” and “Cupid and Hymen,” or more generally in the use of particular themes or subjects such as marriage—the *Pennsylvania Magazine* in effect redefined the political and geographical category of “American” by transforming it into a behavioral category. Being an American became a matter of acting and thinking in specific ways, and by extension participation in the revolution also became a matter of every day life. For example, the simple act of consuming tea, or any other home-grown product, enabled Americans to “emancipate their country from the slavery and tyranny of an evil custom” (“Substitutes for Tea”). This form of political action, as T. H. Breen has shown, enabled anyone and everyone to participate in the revolutionary process in their own way.<sup>27</sup> To the extent that these articles make the revolutionary experience an integral part of the reader's daily life, they create an atmosphere where every action or thought can be interpreted as either pro-American or pro-British. So, while not every article printed in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* deals directly with a political issue, everything in it takes on a political dimension insofar as it can be construed as a form of acting as an American rather than as a British subject.

Michael Warner contends that “Republican Americans understood print and the nation as intimately related” (119), but that “By calling attention to the Americanness of the author, the publisher provides an economic rather than aesthetic argument for its purchase” (120). This was true for Paine to a certain extent. There is no doubt that part of the magazine's emphasis on “original” American essays was economically motivated, but it also seems true that for Paine, this connection between print and nation also had larger ideological implications. In his study of the origins of the modern concept of nationality and the emergence of nations, Benedict Anderson has suggested that certain forms of print, specifically the novel and the newspaper, “provided the technical means for ‘re-presenting’ the kind of

imagined community that is the nation" (25). Paine seems to have sensed that creating a viable national identity for Americans other than through their customary association with Britain was a crucial part of the revolutionary process. In the American colonies the monthly magazine offered an ideal vehicle for this purpose. If, as Anderson argues, the "mass-ceremony" of daily newspaper reading provided certain reading publics with a sense of community (35), in the American colonies, where the almanac had traditionally organized time in monthly increments, the temporal logic of the magazine served even more powerfully to create a sense of shared identity. So, I would add the magazine to Anderson's novel and newspaper.

The *Pennsylvania Magazine* thus provides a perfect example of what John Adams meant in 1815 when, in one of his most famous letters to Thomas Jefferson, he suggested that the war was only the "Effect and Consequence" of the true revolution which "was in the Minds of the People, and this was effected, from 1760 to 1775, in the course of fifteen Years before a drop of blood was drawn at Lexington" (455). Paine had been one of the first to understand that in order for the revolution to take place in the minds of the people, and for it to succeed, it first had to be made available to them. Even as the magazine aimed to educate colonial Americans and lead them down the path to independence, it also served as an apprenticeship for Paine as he perfected the political and rhetorical strategies that would propel him to prominence as a spokesman for the revolution. It seems only appropriate, however accidental it may have been, that the last issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* was the July 1776 edition, for the Declaration of Independence, which was reprinted in that issue, provided concrete evidence that the people had learned the lessons Paine was so eager to teach. As he would observe in his *Letter to the Abbé Raynal* six years later, "Our style and manner of thinking have undergone a revolution more extraordinary than the political revolution of the country. We see with other eyes, we hear with other ears; and think with other thoughts, than those we formerly used" (CW 2: 243). Paine's goal as editor of *The Pennsylvania Magazine* and throughout most of his career as a writer, for which the magazine editorship prepared him, was to foster precisely such a revolution in the people's style and manner of thinking. Not surprisingly, then, his most enduring and successful works, *Common Sense*, *The Rights of Man*, and *The Age of Reason*, all attest to his commitment to help his fellow men see with other eyes, hear with other ears, and think other thoughts.

No one has been able to ascertain the exact date, but Paine seems to have ceased to work for Aitken sometime between August and September of 1775, when they parted ways in a dispute over Paine's compensation.<sup>28</sup> After Paine's departure Aitken continued to publish his magazine, which he now also presumably edited, through July 1776, when the war made it impossible for him to keep publishing it. Meanwhile, Paine, who had essen-

tially acquired a new profession through his work for Aitken, continued his new career as a writer by publishing various essays in the Philadelphia newspapers and writing *Common Sense*. Prior to editing Aitken's magazine Paine had only written an address to the British Parliament advocating an increase in wages for his fellow excisemen in England, "The Case of the Officers of Excise," which failed to persuade Parliament and cost him his job. It would not be until 1775, when he began working for Aitken, that Paine would publish on a regular basis. In his account of his service to the American cause, presented to the Continental Congress in 1783 as part of his plea for monetary compensation, Paine denied ever having published prior to his arrival in America: "The first public work I undertook (and the first thing I ever published in my life except a few miscellaneous pieces in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* in the year '75 for in England I never was the author of a syllable in print) was the pamphlet *Common Sense*" (CW 2: 1229). Paine seems to have wanted to convey the impression that he had emerged *ex nihilo* as a writer with a work of the magnitude of *Common Sense*. Although Paine had published prior to arriving in America, it was through his editorship of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* that Paine came to consider himself a professional writer. During his stint as editor of Aitken's magazine Paine had gained the literary skills necessary for him to "create a literary style designed to bring his message to the widest possible audience," and he would introduce that style a few short months after leaving the magazine (Foner xvi). Paine's success at bringing about such revolutionary changes in the public sprang from his ability to persuade his readers to see themselves as he wanted them to; to use Paine's own words, they did see with other eyes for they now would see with Paine's eyes. In the case of the American Revolution, those who failed to be so educated could now expect more violent means of persuasion.

## NOTES

I would like to thank Jay Fliegelman for his insightful comments on numerous drafts of this essay. I am also grateful to George Dekker, Susan Scott Parrish, and Jonathan Grossman for their thoughtful suggestions.

1. In *Common Sense* Paine would return to this sexual analogy only to make the opposite point: "Can ye give prostitution its former innocence? Neither can ye reconcile Britain and America. . . . As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the continent forgive the murders of Britain" (CW 1: 30). Unlike Curioso's version of the feminized nation, where America can regain her virtue by raising an army, Paine's does not allow for a restoration of virtue. The difference, of course, is that Curioso's account focuses on each party's behavior whereas Paine's deals with the nature of the relationship between them.

2. On 18–19 April American rebels confronted General Gage's army when he attempted to seize rebel weapons and ammunition stored in Concord, just outside

of Boston. In June of 1775 British and American troops faced one another in the Battle of Bunker Hill, generally considered the first battle of the Revolution.

3. By "public sphere" I am referring to the notion, set forth by Jürgen Habermas, of an arena in which, as Michael Warner has put it, "political discourse could be separated both from the state and from civil society, the realm of private life (including economic life)" (x). And, perhaps most significantly, because of this distance, the public sphere could "regulate or criticize both," that is, the state and civil society (Warner x).

4. In *The Strength of a People* Richard D. Brown provides an insightful account of the process whereby common people were slowly included in the realm of politics. Regarding Paine's role in this process Brown notes, "The innovations in Paine's pamphlet presumed an audience of politically interested common men, not an elevated citizenry of gentlemen and masters of business" (64).

5. For an account of the emergence and rise of the republican paradigm see Rodgers, "Republicanism: the Career of a Concept."

6. Despite recognizing this period's crucial role in Paine's development as a writer, Keane, who is most interested in Paine as a political figure, dedicates only a brief section of his otherwise very thorough biography to assessing the impact of this experience of Paine. Commenting on the significance of Paine's term as editor of Aitken's magazine, Keane has observed, "Paine's involvement with *The Pennsylvania Magazine* served as a literary apprenticeship. He was allowed to experiment with different ways of writing, and his role brought him into contact with a rich variety of ideas and forms of writing that stimulated his restless mind" (95). Keane's discussion of Paine's editorship, however, is largely bibliographical in nature, documenting which items were authored by Paine and his motivations for writing them.

7. On the significance of coffeehouses and taverns in early America see David W. Conroy, *In Public Houses*.

8. Cave borrowed the motto "E Pluribus Unum" from Peter Motteaux's earlier publication the *Gentleman's Journal*. For more on the connections between Cave and Motteaux's respective publications see Carlson's *The First Magazine* 29–58. Jay Fliegelman has discussed the later adoption of Cave's publication's motto for the United States; see *Declaring Independence* 173.

9. In the fourth and fifth chapters of *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600–1740*, Michael McKeon traces the "gradual discrediting of aristocratic honor" that culminated in the middle of the eighteenth century (133). Also on the subject of the definition, role, and influence of the English aristocracy during this period see, Beckett, *The Aristocracy in England, 1660–1914*, and Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558–1641*.

10. See McKeon 133.

11. Paine's acute awareness of the magazine's audience is reflected in his choice of the essay on ants which directly appeals to a working class readership by raising questions about labor and the workers' right to the fruits of their labor. Along these lines, Jack P. Greene has suggested that Paine played a key role in what he calls "the modernization of political consciousness" (73). Greene argues that, "The result [of this modernization] was a wholly new political mentality for participants at all levels of the political process" and that, "This transformation was accompanied by—and played a key role in bringing about—two crucial developments: the mobilization of large segments of society that had previously been inert, and the desecularization of the traditional political order" (74).

12. In his "Proposal" published in the *Pennsylvania Packet* Aitken describes the first of the six sections of his new publication in the following manner: "A pro-

portion of nearly the same number of pages in each Magazine will be set apart for original American productions, and the greatest attention given that none be admitted but such as are of real merit." The anxiety about the quality of the American pieces that is in evidence in this passage further underscores the novelty of such a proposition.

13. Aitken was also the official printer for Franklin's American Philosophical Society, and had also published Freneau's "Rising Glory of America" and James Burgh's *The Art of Speaking*.

14. CW 2: 1131.

15. The "Publisher's Preface" and the lead article of the debut issue, "On the Utility of Magazines" are among the articles Aitken attributes to Paine in a letter to James Carey, the editor of an early two-volume compilation of Paine's writing. See Frank Smith, "New Light on Thomas Paine's First Year in America, 1775."

16. See Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims*.

17. In *Revolution and the Word*, Cathy N. Davidson argues that "Given both the literary insularity of many novel readers and the increasing popularity of the novel, the genre necessarily became a form of education, especially for women. Novels allowed for a means of entry into a larger literary and intellectual world and a means of access to social and political events from which many readers (particularly women) would have been otherwise largely excluded" (10). In 1775, I would argue, this was precisely the role Paine imagined for the magazine.

18. According to the *OED*, the term "infect," which Paine uses along with "improve" to describe the effects a magazine may have on its readers, was just shifting from its primary neutral to its more familiar negative sense. In the context of Paine's sentence the word could serve as an appositive for improve. In its neutral sense, however, the term could also be read negatively as a warning to his readers about the dangers of the British press.

19. On the connections between consumption and the revolution see T. H. Breen, "Baubles of Britain": The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century."

20. The author of "Substitutes for Tea" draws on the discourse of luxury, which would have been all too familiar to his readers, but he subverts it by putting it in the service of a revolutionary agenda instead of its usual conservative aim. As John Sekora has shown, luxury was typically used in the eighteenth century to uphold traditional hierarchical structures in society. See Sekora, *Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett*.

21. For a more detailed analysis of the connections between gender and class in the formation of an American identity see Smith-Rosenberg, "Dis-Covering the Subject of the 'Great Constitutional Discussion,' 1786-1789." Smith-Rosenberg suggests that in order for the revolution to succeed patriot writers had to "constitute a new American identity, one that Virginia planters, Rhode Island merchants, Georgia farmers, and Pennsylvania artisans would internalize as their own and in that process become subjects of and to a new nation" (843). The magazine, she contends, played a crucial role in this effort to "constitute a new *homo Americanus*." Like Smith-Rosenberg's magazine editors and writers, Paine constructed a white, male, American identity through opposition to class, racial, and gender others, but Paine also sought to constitute an American identity which would be more politically inclusive to lower and middling sorts than its European counterparts.

22. By using an American Indian as a rational commentator who can provide an unbiased assessment of European practices Paine draws on a tradition that dates back as far as Thomas Brown's *Amusements Serious and Comical*, originally pub-



lished in 1700. In his *Amusements* Brown's narrator presents his Indian observer in similar terms to Paine's "American savage:" "Thus I am resolved to take upon me the *Genius* of an *Indian*, who had had the Curiosity to travel hither among us, and who had never seen any Thing like what he sees in *London*. We shall see how he will be amazed at certain things, which the prejudice of Custom makes to seem reasonable and natural to us" (13).

23. In "Letter 116" of the *Persian Letters* Usbek describes the impact of outlawing divorce in Christian countries: "Not only did it take all the pleasure out of marriage, but it also discouraged its purpose. The intention was to strengthen the bonds of marriage, but they were weakened; and instead of uniting two hearts, as had been planned, they were separated forever" (209).

24. Two paragraphs before condemning the parental analogy for colonial relations as a devious rhetorical ploy, Paine asserts that "We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering, that her motive was *interest* not *attachment*" (CW 1: 18).

25. All in all, sixteen different editions of *Aesop's Fables* were published in the colonies between 1777 and 1800, three of which appeared in Philadelphia in 1777. In addition to Aitken's printing of Croxall's translation of the Fables, Robert Bell printed competing translations by Robert Burton and Robert Dodsley in 1777.

26. Paine had also provided evidence of prior instances of British ministers' exploitation of their colonial dominions in essays such as "Reflections on the Life and Death of Lord Clive" (March 1775). In this article, in which Paine documents Lord Clive's brutal actions in India and subsequent fame in England, Paine laments the fate of one of England's other colonial possessions, "But, Oh India! thou loud proclaimer of European cruelties, thou bloody monument of unnecessary deaths" (108). The simple substitution of England for Europe makes the parallel with the American colonists' situation evident. Paine further reinforces his point by referring to Clive's personal economic motives: "Resolved on accumulating an unbounded fortune, he enters into all the schemes of war, treaty, and intrigue" (108). This essay was followed immediately by the first installment of "The Old Bachelor."

27. In "Baubles of Britain" T. H. Breen documents the "politicization of consumption" which took place in the American colonies during the 1760s and 1770s. Breen demonstrates how during these two decades, beginning with the Stamp Act of 1765 and culminating with the Tea Act of 1773, "Parliament managed to politicize consumer goods, and when it did so, manufactured items suddenly took on a radical new symbolic function" such that "before long it was nearly impossible for Americans to speak of imported goods without making reference to constitutional rights" (76, 91). Thus, Breen concludes, "a constitutional crisis transformed private consumer acts into public political statements" (88) thereby providing the colonies with a unifying "language for revolution," which also enabled those usually excluded from colonial politics to play a significant role in this new political arena.

28. Hawke 34-35; Keane 103-104.

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